

## Speaking with the Public Reminders

### Making First Contact

- ❖ Start your interactions with a warm greeting and introduce yourself
  - “Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_, how are you?”
  - “Howdy! I am a volunteer with California State Parks and my name is \_\_\_\_\_. Can I answer any questions?”
  - “Good morning/afternoon/evening! I am \_\_\_\_\_, a volunteer, and I noticed you were looking at the interpretive panel, can I answer any questions?”

### Education is the Word of the Day

- ❖ During contacts, your goal is to educate the public
  - The wonderful biodiversity of our parks
  - Why certain areas or organisms are protected
  - Options for where visitors can go to recreate how they would like to
    - Dogs are allowed on a leash at Blind Beach, Shell Beach or Furlong Gulch, to the south of Goat Rock
    - Drones: May not launch, operate, or land within the boundaries of State Parks in the Sonoma-Mendocino Coast District, but are allowed to fly over State Parks airspace. Not allowed to harass wildlife or endanger people.

### Phrasing is Key

- ❖ When speaking with a member of the public, we use nonconfrontational language
  - Use of the word “I” instead of “you”
    - “I noticed the dog here” vs. “You have your dog here”
    - “My understanding is” vs. “You broke this rule”
  - Phrases to Avoid (Verbal Judo: The Gentle Art of Persuasion)
    - “Come here”
    - “You wouldn’t understand”
    - “Because those are the rules”
    - “Calm down”
    - “I’m doing this for your own good”
    - “Why don’t you be reasonable”

### Tone can Save the Day

- ❖ What you say is important, but how you say it is even more so!
  - Think back to a time someone has told you something and while what they said made sense, it made you mad – because of the tone

### When to Back Off

- ❖ Volunteers are here to help the public and educate
  - Part of your duties is helping people understand what the rules are
- ❖ Volunteers are not enforcers
  - If someone breaks a rule, you can politely inform them of the rule and why it exists, but don’t tell them “they have to leave” or “I’m going to call a ranger” or “you’re going to be in trouble”
- ❖ If someone pushes back, step back
  - Don’t take it personally, just walk away
  - Your safety and well-being are paramount

### Calling Dispatch

- ❖ If there is an egregious violation call NorCom at 916-358-1300
- ❖ Tell them the following:
  - Your name
  - Your location
  - The violation
  - Your phone number

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